

Why Lincoln Was a Lawyer: Abraham Lincoln, the Law & Civic Education

High School Unit Introduction **Grades 9-12**

These lessons are designed to offer classroom presenters an array of activities, all of which are planned to teach to the theme, “Why Lincoln Was a Lawyer: Abraham Lincoln, the Law & Civic Education.” The classroom presenter may choose those activities that they feel are best suited to their students’ needs. Within each set of lesson plans, there are multiple activities. Depending on the length of the class period and the ability level of their students, teachers may tailor the lessons to their specific needs.

Lesson 1. Civic Duty: Defining American Citizenship

Students will explore aspects of civic responsibility, using Abraham Lincoln’s traits as an exemplar. Students will complete surveys, read a historical account of Lincoln’s death, engage in small group and class discussion, and complete a brief writing activity.

Vocabulary: *Ad hominem, Bill of Rights, Civic, Civil Liberties, Conscription*

Lesson 2. The Privileges of Citizenship: Habeas Corpus

Students will explore a specific constitutional privilege, *habeas corpus*, and limitations on the power of the Executive Branch. They will examine a U.S. Supreme Court case from Lincoln’s era. They will also read articles about and discuss contemporary challenges to this right.

Vocabulary: *Habeas Corpus, Martial Law*

Lesson 3. The Responsibilities of Citizenship: Voting Rights

Students will explore a specific constitutional right, the right to vote, with an emphasis on Lincoln’s efforts to extend this right to African Americans. They will discuss the responsibilities of citizens concerning this right, and learn about the history of suffrage in the United States. Students will complete surveys and engage in both small group and class discussion on this topic.

Vocabulary: *Suffrage, Literacy Test, Grandfather Clause*

Indiana Core Standards – Grades 9, 10, 11, 12 **(More detailed standards found on page 27)**

- United States History (USH)
 - Early National Development: 1775 to 1877
 - Historical Thinking
- United States Government (USG)
 - Nature of Politics and Government
 - Foundations of Government in the United States
 - Roles of Citizens in the United States